A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, June 6. 1710.

THO' I can see very little in the Alarm lately raised upon the Coast of *Scotland*; and which, if there is any thing in it, I believe amounts rather to a meer giving us an Alarm, than any thing else; yet I cannot but make a few brief Remarks upon it;

1. By the vigorous Appearance of the honest People in the *West* of *Scotland*, *who, as one Man, shew'd themselves ready upon this Occasion to Testifie their Zeal for her Majesty's Person and Government, and their Abhorrence of the Popish Invaders of her Majesty's Parliamentary Right* —— *or the Prospect of a Roman Pretender*; We may see —— That the Aversions these People shew'd against the Union, were not at all grounded upon Principles of *Jacobitism* —— And tho' for Reasons well known, and on Suppositions of propable Circumstances, *well enough grounded too*, they opposed the Union —— yet they are far from being Dangerous to the Union now it is legally Establish'd; much less are they in any degree Averse to the present Government; and that therefore the Party have very little to hope for from them.
2. We may well judge the Appearance of any Ships on the Coast of *Scotland*, had little of an Invasion in it ——

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Otherwiſe they would never have been ſo Mad, to have come on that ſide and upon that Coaſt, I mean on the ſide of *Galloway* and *Dumfries-ſhire*, where the People are Univerſal *Presbyterian*, and thoroughly Eſtabliſh'd in the utmoſt Averſion to the Deſigns of an Invading Tyrant.

But one Remark I cannot but make here at home, and I am perſwaded you will allow it is juſt; and indeed it is almoſt the ſingle Reaſon, why I mention this noiſe of Enemies upon the Coaſt of *Scotland*, which I hardly think otherwiſe worth any Body's Obſervation. But my hint lies upon a particular thing.

I have in ſome former Papers been Calculating the People, and giving you their Sum in proper Diviſions, as I think they truly appear. I mean ſuch as are for Liberty and Property, and limited Monarchy, and ſuch as are for Tyranny, Non-Reſiſtance, &c.

I muſt go on with this Remark upon the Occaſion of this little Alarm in the North—And tho' my Rule may not be without ſome few Exceptions, yet I appeal to general Obſervation for the Truth of it in the Main.

1. Are there any among us, who are moved at the Thoughts of a *French* Invaſion, that upon any probability of its being in Hand, are Anxious to Prepare againſt it, Zealous to Aſſociate againſt it. Forward to Pray and Fight againſt it? ——— How many *Sacheverellites* ſhall we find among them?

2. Are there any among us, who upon the late Alarm of the Pretender's Landing, diſcover'd a ſecret Joy and Satisfaction at the Confuſions that are like to follow ſuch an Attempt; and who in their Freedoms wiſh Succeſs to ſuch a Barbarous Attempt?——— How many can ye Name among them, but what joined in the late prepoſterous Cry of *Non Reſiſtance*?

In ſhort, *ſhew me the Men* that Drink his Health, With his Landing, that joyn with him, and Careſs a *French* Power, and Court *French* Tyranny; ſhew me the Men that for ſome time paſt, have been furniſhing Arms, Horſes and Ammunition into *Scotland*, and into the *Highlands*——Shew me the Men that promiſe themſelves mighty Things from an Invaſion there, are glad of the News, liſten after it, and prepare to join with it——And I'll undertake to prove every one of them was for the late Exploded, Silenc'd Furioſo, Dr. *Sacheverell*.

What better Proof can there be from hence, than that Dr. *Sacheverell* and his Party here, and the Pretender and his Party there, are all in the ſame Deſign; their Hopes, their Proſpects, their Reſolutions, and their Party are the ſame; and I doubt not but the Doctrine of Hereditary Right and Non-Reſiſtance, are Calculated, the firſt to leſſen and invalidate the Queen's Parliamentary-Claim——and Eſtabliſh the Pretender, which, if he be Legitimate, is truly Hereditary; and then the ſecond is to prove, That his Right being made appear, *it is unlawful to RESIST HIM*. But of this hereafter.

MISCELLANEA.

IN my laſt I made a brief Entrance into the preſent Clamour among the Coal-Traders———and truly, tho' I did believe there were faults on both ſides, as there generally is when great Body's of People fall out—yet as I would be Impartial, and am ſure I have no Intereſt to form on either ſide, nor the leaſt concern in the Buſineſs one way or other, except, *that by my own Arguments I may be oblig'd to pay the more for*

for my Coals——I shall speak Frankly to the Pretensions on both sides; having, I think, examin'd what either side have to say in their Defence.

But before I do this, I think 'tis needful for the Readers Information, to state the Matter of Fact on both sides, as briefly as I can.

The Case is thus,

The Dispute lies between the Lightermen, who are of late become the Chief Buyers of Coals in the River, and the Masters of the Vessels that bring them from *New Castle*.

The Lightermen are the Plaintiffs, and they allege that the Masters have entred into a secret Contract one to another, which they have form'd into an Instrument, and Sign'd and Seal'd it upon the Forfeiture of 100*l.* to be paid by every one that breaks the Agreement——This Contract obliges them, when they are Loaden at *Newcastle*, to Sail only to *Harwich*; and after they are Deliver'd at *London*, to go back only to *Harwich*, and there to stay for one another, to come up to *London* in such Number, and go back in such Manner and Numbers as they shall agree among themselves——and not to run before one another, out or home.

The meaning of the Masters it seems is this, That being thus oblig'd not to hasten away faster than the whole Fleets can be Dispatch'd, the Force formerly put upon them by the Buyers, to Sell LOW, or lye Undeliver'd shall be taken off; since now no Man will be Oblig'd to Sell Cheaper than he can afford, *as they say has been the way*, purely to prevent his Neighbour running away before him, and perhaps coming again before he shall be Deliver'd——Also 'tis to prevent the Lightermen, who it seems have their private Contracts too, from Buying up such or such particular Mens Coals, as they have an Interest to Dispatch before other.

This the Lighterman call a COMBINATION; and the Laws against Combinations in Trade, are known to all Men——Upon this supposition, some Prosecutions were Threatned, tho' I do not hear they go on with them.

Mean time the City and my Lord M...r have been moved to concern themselves in it; and indeed, if they did their Duty that way, I believe they might bring it to a Conclusion, and make Peace between the Parties.

But, God knows, *City Peace-makers* are very strange things, and so it falls out here; for instead of Accommodations, the City appears rather on one side, and when they cannot Byass the Matter as they would have it——they fly to little vexatious Shifts, such as searching out Old Acts of Parliaments, which confine the Coal-Ships not to lye above two a-breast in the River, and setting the Water-Bailiff to Fine and Amerce them on that score——Tho', *as I am apt to believe*, should such a Fleet of Colliers as is *just now* in the River, be oblig'd to Ride but two a-breast, there is hardly Room for them between *London* and *Gravesend*; that is, *where they can lye safe, and afloat at low Water*——And this I speak not by Information, *but upon my own knowledge of the River*, which I have some Reason to pretend to, and will undertake to Demonstrate the Probability of it.

I do confess this low Step looks as if the Cause was not so good, as I could Wish every Cause the City Embarks in should be——Since were the thing just, there would need no such far-fetch'd Subterfuges, and little doing, which looks like Revenge, and signifies an Impotence of other Advantages—And so much for the Plaintiffs.

The Masters of the Coal Ships are the Defendants; and I find indeed they have a great deal to say, which I will State as briefly as I can——and give my own Opinion afterwards, without respect to either.

They say that the Trade is Ruin'd by the Encroachments of the Lightermen, who are grown up to a Management upon the whole Trade——That as they are Charg'd with Combinations, &c. in their not Running as they us'd to do to Market,

so

ſo on the other Hand, they find the Lightermen in a Combination with the Fitters at *New-caſtle*, to Sell ſuch and ſuch Mens Coals, *and no others*: So that particular Perſons having always the Head of the Market, the other are delay'd and impos'd upon in order to reduce them to the neceſſity of Selling lower——That by theſe Artifices, tho' they have both an Advance of Price, and an Abridgment of Meaſure, yet they Sell at Market lower than before: *Nay*, tho' there is an Aditional Tax of 3 *s. per* Chaldron laid on by the laſt Parliament, yet Coals were Cheaper laſt Fleet than before the Tax——All which is Effected by the Power of the Lightermen; and is meerly done out of the Livelihoods of the Ships, and the Stocks of the Owners, who manifeſtly Sail'd every Voyage to loſs, and began to ſee their abſolute Ruin before them——That the Fitters at *New-caſtle* had brought this Project to ſuch a head, that the Lightermen at *London* receiv'd 1500 *l. per Annum* from the Coal-Owners for their Management——That by theſe Things, the Navigation was brought to that paſs, that it was clear, the Lightermen and Fitters would, and ſome had already Boaſted, they would in a little Time, Buy all the Ships in the Trade, and have them for little or nothing——and that then they would put their own Price upon the Market, and Ruin all thoſe that would not Sail under them.

That to prevent their manifeſt Deſtruction, and the Ruin of their Owners; they, the Maſters were oblig'd to agree together only to a ſteady, conſtant and equal Method of Sailing; that none ſhall run before another, but come and go fairly, and Hand in Hand with equal Advantages—— The Conſequences of which they deſire ſhould be no other, than that every one ſhould have equal Advantages of a Market, and not be forc'd to Work to their Diſadvantage, others being partially Diſpatch'd before them, that ſo the Price may be equal, and be ſuch they can ſupport the Trade by.

This, they ſay, is no more a Combination than Travellers Combine to go together for fear of Highway-men; than the Grand Alliance is a Combination againſt *French* Tyranny, or the Queen's Fleet a Combination to keep Enemies off from the Coaſt; and they ſeem Reſolv'd both to keep faſt to their Engagement, and Defend the Practice by the Laws.

Theſe, as near as I can draw them up, are the Allegations on both ſides, which I have, ſet down impartially, without any Reflections on either Hand. I ſhall in my next look into the Merits of the Cauſe; and ſpeak my Thought as free from Partiality as I have here; and with all poſſible Care to injure neither Party, and yet to clear up the Caſe, and its Miſchiefs or Remedies, to publick View.

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N. B. For Privacy, he will attend any Gentleman at any Place, near the Places Hours above-mentio'd. Thoſe, who live in the Country, may be ſupply'd by wriing Letters.

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